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RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA 0143  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0191  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0511  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NOUAKCHOTT 000488

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/08/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [MR](#)

SUBJECT: INSPECTOR GENERAL SEES MILITARY CORRUPTION AS  
REASON FOR THE COUP

Classified By: Ambassador Mark M. Boulware for Reasons 1.4 (b and d)

¶1. (C) DCM met September 8 with Mauritanian National Inspector General Mohamed Abba Ould Sidi Ould Jeilany at the IG's request. A clearly disgusted Jeilany (strictly protect) told DCM that he was convinced the generals had gone after President Abdallahi because they were afraid they would be prosecuted for corruption his office had uncovered in the Military Command. Jeilany said he had found over seven billion ouguiya (over \$30 million) in illegal payments to senior military officers over a six month investigation. He had documented payments from substantial Mauritanian businessmen channeled to the High Command through Col. Ahmed Ould Eleya -- half brother of former President Col. Ely Mohamed Vall (Comment -- DCM noted that relations between General Aziz and Col. Vall were understood to be very poor. Jeilany said that was the image Vall tried to portray to outsiders but that the two remained well connected at least for money matters. End Comment) Just prior to the coup, President Abdallahi had instructed the Central Bank to cooperate fully with the Inspector General's Officer in the investigation. Jeilany is convinced that knowledge of the investigation was behind the military's efforts to oust Abdallahi. He said that on August 20 he had forwarded a report detailing a single \$1 million transaction from Groupe de Banque Mauritanian (owned by Mohamed Ould Bouamatou) to Col. Ould Eleya and that he was called by General Aziz directly and told to stand down. Jeilany added that Aziz had called him the day following the coup to provide a list of persons he should investigate. Jeilany had refused saying his investigations could not be politicized.

¶2. (C) DCM asked whether an investigation had been launched into the KB Foundation of President Abdallahi's wife that seemed the focus of so much attention. Jeilany said "the petty theft of the wife is paltry compared to the military" adding that he had started an investigation prior to the coup that had uncovered inappropriate land transfers to the Foundation and an inappropriate travel expense of \$6000 paid to a Foundation official. Jeilany had suspended the investigation when General Aziz had sought to politicize the initial findings. Jeilany thought a full investigation over several months would have found further but relatively modest corruption related to the Foundation. He was quick to note that he had found no wrongdoing by President Abdallahi adding that the President had authorized interviews and audits related to the investigation of his wife's foundation.

¶3. (C) Jeilany said General Aziz had funneled substantial funding before and after the elections to establish his "Parliamentary Brigade" inside the National Assembly.

Looking at the current emergency session, he said Aziz's intent was to have his "Brigade" pass a constitutional revision for indirect election of the President by the Parliament and then have himself elected President. Jeilany agreed that the strategy had been hampered by the split of Ahmed Ould Daddah from the generals -- he said Aziz had 55 of the 95 members of the Assembly in his "Brigade" which was sufficient to set the agenda but not enough to meet the 2/3rds majority needed for a constitutional reform.

¶4. (C) Jeilany noted that for all the "getting hard on corruption" rhetoric in the Laghdaf "government" he had yet to be seriously engaged by the new Prime Minister. He agreed that the Secretary General of the Presidency Mohamed Lemine Ould Guig had a good reputation on fighting corruption but noted that the new head of the National Petroleum Company Mohamed Ould Bahiya (former Minister of Hydrology and Energy under Waghef) was particularly corrupt -- Jeilany had documented a \$1.5 million payment to a fictitious vendor perpetrated by Bahiya. In discussing possible targeted sanctions, Jeilany offered that sanctions on businessmen would have the greatest effect -- eventually making support of General Aziz too costly. He noted that some of the military, including General Aziz, have property outside Mauritania but provided no details.

¶5. (C) Jeilany had ostensibly asked to meet to discuss the status of a \$500,000 ODPAT program we had proposed to support the work of his office. DCM advised that, since funded by Development Assistance funds, U.S. legal restrictions applied following the coup would necessarily cancel the initiative.

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The IG said he had assumed that to be the case. DCM noted that even if there was a policy waiver available, the Mission would not try to move forward on the program adding that while we had faith in Jeilany, we were not confident anymore in his office. Jeilany agreed saying he expected to be fired any day now (if not worse) and he was sure whoever replaced him would follow the generals' bidding.  
Boulware